

Your Best Body



A story about losing weight

This is the story of two women, Jackie and Rhonda, and how they are losing weight.



What makes this story worth reading is that you can learn about ways to lose weight.

As you read what Jackie and Rhonda have to say, you will answer questions for yourself. The story has four parts:

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Chapter 1

Rhonda wants to lose weight



Rhonda: Jackie, I'm so tired of being heavy.

Jackie: What's wrong?

Rhonda:

The dress I just bought for my niece's wedding is too tight now. I tried that dress on two weeks ago and it was fine. Nothing fits me. I am tired all the time. I don't mind being large, but this has got to stop.

Jackie:

Why don't we get together later? I have a couple of outfits you could try on. Besides, I asked my doctor about losing weight. Diets just don't work for me. I'm trying something else and it's really working. Maybe you can use my ideas to lose weight.

Get a pencil. And answer the questions below.

Stand up tall; don't bend.

Does your stomach hide your toes?

☐ yes

☐ no

Is your waist bigger than your hips?

☐ yes

☐ no

If you said yes, you have extra fat and that's not healthy.



Later

Rhonda: OK. You said you were trying something new to lose weight. Tell me all about it.

Jackie: Well, you know how many crazy diets we went on. None of them worked.



Rhonda: Yes, indeed. We tried grapefruit, breakfast bars, and diet shakes.

Jackie: And those diet pills. I wasted a lot of money on them.

Rhonda: So what are you doing this time?

Jackie: I walk more. And I eat more fruits and vegetables and less fat. It doesn't cost money because I don't buy a lot of special food. I am losing weight. My clothes fit me better. I feel better. It's not magic and it's not easy, but it's working.

Rhonda: More fruits and vegetables and less fat! And you walk more! It's easy to say but hard to do.

Jackie: If you make up your mind, you can do it too. Why don't you try it with me?

Rhonda: OK. Let's work together!



Chapter 2

Jackie Wants To Wear A Size 16 Again



Rhonda: You have been big a long time. Why did you decide to lose weight now?

Jackie: I knew I had to do something. My feet hurt; my clothes were too tight. I was always out of breath and tired.

I talked to my doctor and we worked out a simple plan. First, I had to decide how much weight to lose.

Rhonda: How much weight are you trying to lose?

Jackie: I felt good when I could wear a size 16 dress and I was about 170 pounds then. So 170 pounds is my goal.

Rhonda: Girl...is that all you want to lose? Size 16 isn't small.

Jackie: I know. I am not a small person. No one in my family is small. You have to lose what makes sense to you and lose it slowly.



Rhonda: Maybe. I'll try losing weight with you.

Jackie: Great. It will be fun to do it together.

Rhonda: Tell me some of your tips. How did you get started?

Jackie: Here are some of the things that worked for me.

Get a pencil. And answer the questions below.

How much do you weigh now?

What would you like to weigh?

What size pants would you like to wear?

What size dress would you like to wear?

Getting Started



Eat three meals a day. Don't starve yourself and then stuff. It won't work.



Throw away your grease can. Don't eat bacon grease and other meat fat.



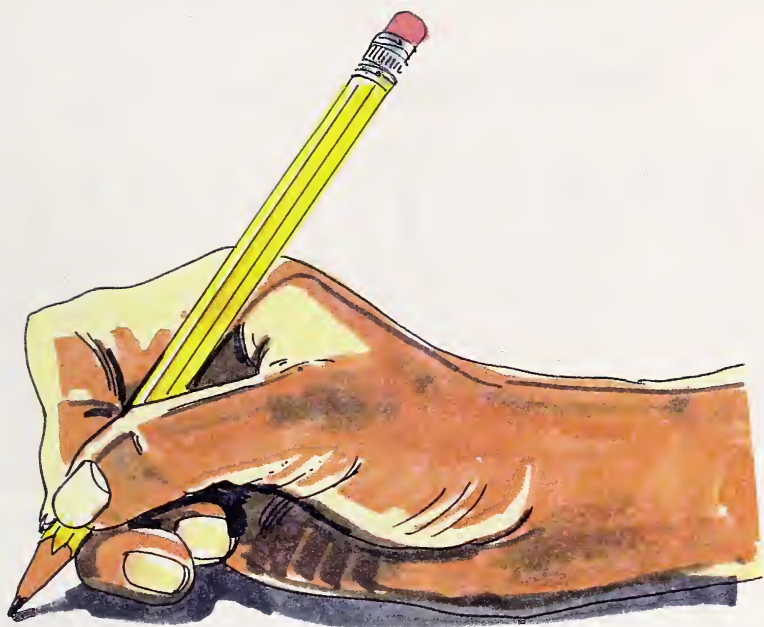
Cut down on the number of cakes and cookies you buy. Spend that money on fresh fruits and vegetables on sale.



Take the stairs, and walk every time you can. It really helps to lose weight if you are more active.



Call a friend or take a walk instead of eating. Don't eat because you are bored, upset, or lonely.



Do you need to lose weight?

- ☐ yes ☐ no

Check which tips you can try first:

- ☐ Eat 3 meals a day; don't skip meals.
- ☐ Throw away your grease can.
- ☐ Eat more fruits and vegetables.
- ☐ Walk or climb stairs every time you can.
- ☐ Take a walk or call a friend instead of eating.

Chapter 3

Jackie Shares Some Tips



Rhonda: You're looking good.

Jackie: I'm losing weight. I have lost 8 pounds this month.

Rhonda: I can tell. Your pants look a little big on you. How do you do it?

Jackie: First, I don't skip meals. I eat breakfast, lunch, dinner, and only healthy snacks.

*Losing weight takes time.
Go slowly.
Lose one or two pounds a week.*

Jackie: You know I never used to eat breakfast and hardly any lunch. As soon as I got home from work I started eating... and never stopped all night!

Rhonda: I know that story all right!

Jackie: But now, I eat three meals a day.



Eat breakfast.

- orange juice
- grits with raisins
- bran muffins
- banana



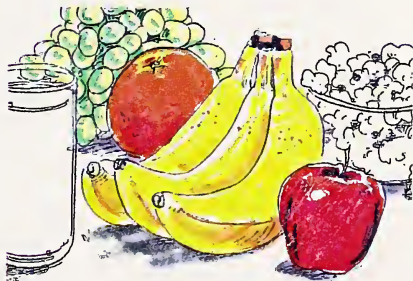
Eat lunch.

- tuna salad sandwich on whole wheat bread with tomato
- apple
- vegetable soup



Eat dinner.

- beans and rice
- collard greens
- corn bread
- fruit cobbler



Eat healthy snacks.

- milk
- grapes
- orange
- apple
- popcorn
- bananas



Jackie: Next, I stopped eating so much. I don't pile the food on my plate. I take only one helping. The best part is I don't make special food just for me. I eat what my family eats.

Get a pencil. Check these boxes.

Do you eat in the morning?

☐ yes ☐ no

Do you eat lunch?

☐ yes ☐ no

Do you eat in the evening?

☐ yes ☐ no

Do you eat healthy snacks?

☐ yes ☐ no

Does your plate look like this? ☐ yes ☐ no



Too Much

Does your plate look like this? ☐ yes ☐ no



Better

Rhonda: Hummm...Eat three meals a day. Don't pile the food up on your plate, and no extra helpings. Anything else that helps?

Jackie: Yes, I drink a lot of water. It sort of fills me up and the doctor said drink water every day.

*How many glasses of water do you drink each day?
Try to drink at least 6 glasses of water each day.*

Rhonda Eats Less Fat



Jackie: Hey, Rhonda. How are you doing?

Rhonda: OK, I guess. I am trying to lose weight the way we talked about. But girl, it is hard!

Jackie: You have to go slowly. Don't change everything at the same time.

Rhonda: I am not trying to change too many things.



Rhonda: I take only one spoonful of gravy or salad dressing.

And I'm not having any fried foods. I bake everything now. I haven't used my oven so much in years.

I do miss those fried foods. This is not easy.



Jackie: I know it's hard. We are used to a lot of fried food. After a while, you lose your taste for all that grease. You won't even want to eat it.

Get your pencil out and answer.

Do you eat fried food more than once a week?

☐ yes ☐ no

Do you eat chicken skin?

☐ yes ☐ no

If you said yes, you are eating too much fat.



Jackie: Say, look what I found - a cookbook with soul food.

Rhonda: Let's see. I thought soul food was bad for us.

Jackie: No, look. Soul food is healthy food - greens, chicken, sweet potatoes, corn bread. It's the added grease that puts too much fat on us.

Low Fat Soul Food Cooking Tips:

- Cook greens with fresh turkey parts without skin, not lard or fat back.
- Mash sweet potatoes with orange juice and cinnamon. Leave out the butter.
- For biscuits, use corn oil and skim milk, instead of lard and regular milk.
- Make macaroni and cheese with skim milk and low fat cheese.
- For crispy fish, roll in cornmeal. For crispy chicken, remove the skin, then roll in bread crumbs. Bake instead of fry.

Later



Rhonda: I tried some of those soul food cooking tips. They are good. You and I have really changed the way we cook.

Jackie: Yes, and don't we look good. I feel great, too.

*Will you join Jackie and Rhonda
and lose weight?*

*Come on with us. Eat less fat. Walk more.
You can have your best body, too!*

Name _____

Black American
"Your Best Body" Booklet
Reading Grade Level: 1
Dimensions: 5.5" x 8.5"

NATIONAL
CANCER
INSTITUTE